FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a news-item captioned "CBI frames five officials of Super Bazar" appeared in the 'Time's of India' dated 15th April, 1997;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether misappropriation of funds came to the notice of the Government; if so, the amount involved;

(d) whether any FIR has been lodged in this connection;

(e) whether it is a fact that these officers have not been suspended even after the registration of FIR by the CBI; and

(f) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS (SHRI RAGHUBANS PRASAD SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) According to information furnished by the Super Bazar, Delhi the surprise check and inspection conducted by the Vigilance Department of their branch at New Friends Colony, Delhi, had revealed that branch officials of the Super Bazar through connivance and conspiracy as well as manipulation committed various acts of commission and omission resulting in misappropriation and stock shortages amounting to Rs. 6,17,094.67. On the basis of the above finding, 5 officials of the Super Bazar, Delhi working in that branch during the period were put under suspension on 4.11.1996.

(d) to (f) In view of the seriousness of the matter, the Super Bazar Management referred the case to the CBI which has registered an FIR on 22.04.1997 involving 3 officials who were already under suspension and two more accounts officials pertaining to the Regional Distribution Centre of Super Bazar at Trilok Puri.

Edible Oil Industry Faces Crisis

481. SHRI GOVINDRAO ADIK: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news report appearing in the 'Hindustan Times' dated 11th July, 1997 under the caption "Edible Oil Industry faces crisis";

(b) if so, the reaction of Government to the observations made therein and facts of the matter regarding extent of crisis being faced by edible oil industry, State-wise;

(c) the details of representations received by Government from various organizations; and

(d) the details of action taken/proposed to be taken both short term and long term for revival, upgradation, modernisation and development of edible oil industry sector in the country during 1997-98 and Ninth Five Year Plan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS (SHRI RAGHUBANS PRASAD SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Government is of the view that the prevailing custom duty provides reasonable protection to the domestic industry. In the context of the persistent shortfall in demand availability of edible oils, import of edible oils (except a few exceptions) has been placed under OGL so as to ensure their availability at reasonable prices to the consumers. The Vegetable Oil Policy has to harmonise the interests of the producers, farmers, processors and consumers.

(c) and (d) Government has also received representation from the Solvent Extractors' Association of India in this regard. Some of the measures taken, both short term and long term, for development of vegetable oil industry are:—

(i) The ongoing Oilseeds Production Programme (OPP) provides essential assistance to the States for production and distribution of quality seeds, plant protection measures including supply of plant protection chemicals and equipments and organising demonstration of

advanced technology, with particular reference to mustard, groundnut, soyabean and sunflower.

(ii) Supporting oilseeds projects of the National Dairy Development Board.

(iii) The Technology Mission on Oilseeds (TMO) aims at harnessing the best production, processing and management technologies, to accelerate self reliance in oilseeds production.

(iv) Intensification of research efforts for increasing production of oilseeds.

(v) Increasing the areas under non-traditional oilseeds crops like soyabean and sunflower, exploitation of oilseeds of tree and forest origin, rice bran etc.

(vi) Setting up of necessary processing and infrastructural facilities to keep pace with the production programme of oilseeds.

(vii) Assistance for oil palm development.

(viii) Better incentive to producers through fixation of minimum support prices of major oilseeds.

Spoilt Sugar Entered Mumbai Port in Cargo-Vessel

482. SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA:
SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SAMBHAJIRAO SHINDE:

Will the Minister of FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that about one thousand tonnes of spoilt sugar entered Mumbai port in a cargo-vessel 'MV-Nafalie' in May—June this year;

(b) whether it was found unfit not only for human consumption as such, but also for distilleries; and

(c) if so, how the same has been disposed of?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS (SHRI RAGHUBANS PRASAD SINGH): (a) to (c) A consignment of 1335 tonnes of sugar was brought to Mumbai Port on MV Nafalie on 13.4.1997. The consignment was unloaded from MV Nafalie in stream into barge 'Prosper' under customs permission and supervision on 15.5.1997. The barge has been at berth in Prince's Dock from 12.6.97. As per the certificate issued by Food and Drug Administration, Government of Maharashtra, the sugar is moist, sticky with fermented shell and hence unfit for human consumption. The sugar is still lying loaded on the barge awaiting disposal.

Contractor-Official Nexus Defrauds Government of Crores of Rupees

483. SHRI RAJNATH SINGH 'SURYA':
SHRI O.P. KOHLI:

Will the Minister of FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news appearing in 'The Pioneering' dated 4th July, 1997 under the caption "Contractor-official nexus defrauds Government of crores-major racket in rice transportation";

(b) if so, the reaction of Government thereto;

(c) whether any departmental action has been taken against the FCI officials responsible for this racket;

(d) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(e) the steps proposed to stop such lapses in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS (SHRI RAGHUBANS PRASAD SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (e) The Food Corporation has filed FIR against M/s Gautam Associates, Mohali and M/s Yazen Ayier & Co., Pehowa who were appointed as Transport Contractors by the Food Corporation of India for transportation of foodgrains from Haryana to Imphal (Manipur) for not delivering 4363 MT and 1543 MT of rice worth Rs. 4.25 crores. The Central Government has also approved the proposal of the Food Corporation of India to refer the case to Central Bureau of Investigation for detailed investigation and FCI has taken